Breckenridge Co. Ky. Feb 10th 1850

Dear Brother,

It is a long time since I heard from you all, although you wrote the last letter. I should have written before but had nothing of interest to write, & I dont know as I shall be able to write now any thing of interest. To begin with, Mr Washington, my patron, died the 1st of this month. He died very suddenly, only 3 days sickness. His contract with me will continue good, at least, his family wish to have it. He left 5 unmarried children, 2 boys & 3 girls. One of the sons is a Doctor; at home now but is going to leave in a few days; the other son goes to school to me. Two of the daughters are young & go to school, the other is a lady about 20 or 22 years of age. (She has just sent some apples to me). Perhaps you would like to have me a little more definite & tell you what kind of a "critter" she is. You see she is good because she has sent me some apples. I dont consider this a sure evidence of her goodness, but this in connection with many other similar acts of kindness towards me, makes me think she has, at least, a good heart. She was not at

home during the first 6 or 8 weeks of my teaching here. Of course, the time did not pass so pleasantly then as now. You know the society of ladies is necessary for our happiness. I have said, she is good. She is also intelligent. Since Mr Washington's death matters have been a little confused; before his death we read to each other, history, novels, poetry, newspapers &c & when things become settled I am in hopes we shall renew the plan of reading to each other. This course is pleasant & profitable. So you see Bill, I spend my time pleasantly & profitably. My school numbers 14 scholars. I expect I shall have more in a few days. The opposition school has fallen through & I shall get the scholars.

I want to make 3 or 4 enquiries. I have often been asked about the "niggers" in New England whether they have the right to vote & to give evidence in court. I would like to know about these matters. If you dont know, ask some one that does.

I wish also, you would ask Dr Porter what time the lectures commence in Castleton Medical School; also, how much it costs to attend a course of lectures there, & how much one ought to read in medicine before he goes there. If I have good luck I may go home in the fall & attend lectures at Castleton. I know, however, what next fall may bring about. I may be in Texas or California.

One more important enquiry. I want to

know where I got my middle name West. Thos and three of the Washington family have the same name. They know where they got their name, but I dont know where I got mine. As I got it from my Uncle Steve, that ~~will~~ is well, but I would like to know where he got it, if any one can tell.
I would like, also, to know a little more about my grand-father & great-grand-father. if any one can tell me any thing about the rascals.
Answer these three enquiries fully & quickly.
You seem to think in your letter that you would like to go west, & would go if you were not bound to Old Vermont. Yes, the lust after "filthy-lucre" will make a man blind to his present happiness. It will lead him to misery & hell quicker than any thing else. You might travel the whole world over & you could not find any thing to make so happy a home as you have, you perhaps, might improve yourself, but that you can do equally as well at home by reading. If you are not now most happy & contented, it'll your own fault.
I got a letter a few days since from Asahel Bingham He wrote 2 pages of foolscap & his wife wrote 3. Tell Julia, I expect to hear from her in your answer.
I enclose to Clarissa in this letter a little gold dollar with my name on it. Tell her to take just as much snuff as she can cram into her snout.
Give my love to all, & write soon & write all the news.
Steve

Direct your letter to "Brandenburg"
I received a dunning letter a few days from
Dr W. P. Russell. The amount was $3.50.
If you will get his receipt—I will give you
25 per cent interest. Do as you are a mind to.